## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph on page 5, starting at line 12, as follows:

Each router 26-31 determines the next network node to which a data packet is forwarded before the data packet ultimately arrives at its final destination. As described more fully below, in accordance with one embodiment of the instant invention, one or more of the routers 26-31 in the network 3 determine an efficient route to deliver data packets to the final destination. A ~~Router~~ router 26-31 may be located at any junction of networks or in gateways, including at an Internet point of presence (POP). A POP is the access point to the Internet, and has a unique Internet address. Independent service providers or online service providers typically have a point of presence on the Internet.

Please amend the paragraph on page 13, starting at line 22, as follows:

The first row, which comprises the sequence "1 $D^2$ $D^5$ D $\infty$ $\infty$" indicates that the minimum distance (expressed as exponents) in one step between the first node 6 and second, third, fourth nodes 7, 8, 9, is respectively 2, 5, and 1. The minimum one-step distance between the first node 6 and fifth and sixth nodes 10, 11 is infinity, since no direct connection exists between the first node 6 and fifth and sixth nodes 10, 11. The first element of the first row represents the distance between the first node 6 to itself. In this case, the first element of the first row is one because expressing the distance (*i.e.,* zero) between the first node 6 and itself as an exponent yields one (*i.e,* $D^0$ equals 1). Similarly, the fourth row the cost matrix, which comprises the sequence "$\infty D^2$ $D^3$ 1 D $\infty$" illustrates that the minimum one-step distance between the fourth node 9 and the second, third, and fifth nodes 7, 8, 10 is 2, 3, 1, respectively. The fourth row also illustrates that no one-step connection exits between the fourth node 9 and first and sixth nodes (as denoted by the symbol $\infty$) 6, 11, while the distance between the fourth node 9 and itself is zero (denoted as one since ~~D0~~ $\underline{D}^0$ equals 1).

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Please amend the paragraph on page 20, starting at line 19, as follows:

At the block 610, the routing calculation block 345 determines the minimum distance between the current pair of nodes (*e.g.,* nodes 4 and 6). The minimum distance is determined with reference to the element at row four, column six of the cost matrix, $D^3_{ij}$, which, as mentioned before, illustrates the minimum distance between any two nodes for any given number of steps. In this example, the minimum distance is ~~four~~ <u>three</u> (3) between the fourth and sixth ~~node~~ <u>nodes</u> 9, 11.